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COUNTRY Yugoslavia

SUBJECT Opposition Groups

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In Serbia there are the remains of the Chetniks. I do not happen to know what their number is, but I certainly know that by far the greatest part of the population is on their side, that the population is eager to extend help and would join them when the time comes. It is my opinion that their strength should not be estimated by the number they actually have at present. Their strength is potential, as a nucleus of an organization, which could easily enlist the best of the Serbian youth and which will have the support of the whole nation. Remains of the Chetniks are also in Bosnia and Herzegovina. All of them are considered dangerous by the regime, and purging actions are being undertaken against them.

In Slovenia, there are some small units in the mountains, but I don't know what their strength is.

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They are a secret organization, an underground movement, opposing and fighting the Government with small armed groups. The Government maintains that they consist exclusively of former Ustaashi and that they are sponsored by the Catholic clergy. There are undoubtedly some former Ustaashi among them, who fled to the woods to save their lives, but none of them are of great importance or are guilty of mass murder or cruelties, because the Government would surely have made capital of that.

The Krizari consist, in fact, of Croatian Catholic peasants who are dissatisfied with the Government's policy. Part of the Krizari stay in the woods or hide in villages, but the majority pursue regular duties at home and join the armed groups only in local actions. Their ideology, as far as I know, is a mixture of Croatian nationalism and defense of the Catholic faith. As far as I know they lack a program which would be clearly defined, and the movement could to a certain degree be compared with peasant revolts which swept Europe some centuries ago. Up till now they have carried out minor sabotage in the northern part of Croatia and have taken quite a few actions against persons

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who have imposed upon or abused the peasants, mostly the members of the secret police. There have also been actions against peasants who have identified themselves with the regime or have been used as tools of the regime. It must be said that the Krizari have inspired quite a fear among the secret police.

In the northern part of Croatia the Krizari are operating in the districts of Belovar, Koprivnica, Ludbreg, Ivanic Grad and Krizevac, using as their hiding places the vicinity of Bilo Gora, Kamnik. In Slovenia they are in the Papuk and Krndija. They are reputed also to be in the mountains around Petrenja. Purging activities against them were undertaken at the beginning of this year by special troops under the command of the secret police officers.

Elsewhere the Krizari operate in Herzegovina, in places where Croatian Catholic peasants live; also in similar districts in Bosnia. Purging activities on a considerable scale have been undertaken against them in those areas.

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As to the number of Krizari, it is difficult to tell. The Government does not give any publicity to such actions, and all the public knows is from rumors. [redacted] that the Krizari are "very strong" around Belovar, Koprivnica, Ludbreg. That has also been confirmed by some people coming from that part of the country. It is also true that travel in some areas in northern Croatia, some parts of Bosnia and Herzegovina is a dangerous undertaking. It is certainly true that members of the secret police feel very insecure in those districts.

25X1 However, summing up, [redacted] the Krizari are a potential force which could develop into a great danger to the regime if they get proper guidance, leadership and a program, and if they can get wider support from abroad. I mean support of some exiled Croatian politician. At present [redacted] 25X1 would not suggest that such support come from a top ranking man or a man who could be identified with a political party, i.e., that his support means the support of the party and that he is speaking in the name of the party.

The whole movement is a hopeful sign that the nation is not being subdued, but if it does not get proper leadership, program and aid, the whole movement will not have a chance to succeed and will be crushed by the overwhelming and ruthless forces of the Government.

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